

# THE REHEARSAL Of Observator, &c.

*More of the Fire of London. The Actors in it. And the End for which it was Design'd.*

From **Saturday** September the 2d, to **Saturday** September the 9th, 1704.

**Country-m.** **P**Ox take thee for an *Observator*. If thou serve me such another Trick, my Oaken-Towel shall come to

thy share.

**Obf.** How now, *Country-man*, Thou'rt grown very Resty of Late.

**Country-m.** Thou sent'st me full speed last *Saturday* to look for 3 *London Gazetts*, Num. 47, 48, 49. In full expectation to find that it was the High-Church Men who Burnt *London*, or else such a Relation of it, as to give us Room to Turn it upon them. Whereby we had *Sunk* them for ever. But on my Conscience, Man, it was the *True-Blue-Whigs*, the very *Green-Ribbon-Club* who did it; And, *W's me*, were *Hang'd* for't.

**Obf.** I did it to try thy Zeal, and thy Wit. Thy Zeal, to see if any thing Cou'd *Shake* thee from the *Good-Old Cause*. And thy Wit, to see if thou Can'st not yet find a Way to Turn it upon the High Church?

**Country-m.** As to my Zeal, I'd rather 100 *Londons* were Burnt, than that the Cause shou'd Mifcarry. But for my Wit, I ask thy Pardon, the Devil can't turn this upon the Church, Mr. *Bays*.

**Obf.** No. No one Devil has so much Brave Impudence. But *Legion* has. And has done it.

**Country-m.** How? Prithee.

**Obf.** Why, we have Turn'd it upon the Court; and thou know'st, That's all one with the Church, for they always keep together; And the one Supports the other.

**Country-m.** That's True. We always find it so. And therefore when we *Down* with *One*, we must *Down* with *Both*. But how the Devil can'st thou Turn it upon the Court? Have we any Proofs?

**Obf.** I shall never do Good with thee. Thou'rt still talking of Proofs. How oft have I told thee, That we have no Need of Proofs? Thou Souce-Crown, what is it that Proofs do Prove?

**Country-m.** Why the Truth. What shou'd they Prove?

**Obf.** Then they detect Lies, don't they.

**Country-m.** O, now my Understanding begins to open—Besides, what would become of *Jealousies* and *Fears*, and *Surmises*, and *Innuendoes*, if *Proofs* were Requir'd? We shou'd be Quite *Dis-Arm'd*, and not have one *Stone* to *Throw*, if *Proofs* come in Play. Therefore go on, my dear Bully.

**Obf.** We say then, That these were *Honest Men* who were *Hang'd* for the Fire of *London*; Because they were All of *US*. And consequently, That it was a Court and Sham-Plot, to cast so Terrible an Odium upon *US*.

**Country-m.** Then the Court were the *Witches*, who Told of the Fire of *London*, four Months before it came to pass. And nam'd the very Day on which it was Done!

**Obf.** 'Tis easie for *Managers* to be *Prophets*.

**Country-m.** But they don't use to *Blab* at this Rate, and Tell their own *Designs* before hand.

**Obf.** What is that to me? Let them look to that!

**Country-m.** But these Poor Men who Suffer'd for it, did Confess it.

**Obf.** They were *Rogues* for that. But no doubt

they were *Brib'd* to it, *Brib'd* by the Court, as sure as a Gun!

**Country-m.** What! *Brib'd* to be *Hang'd*!

**Obf.** Ay, ay, for the Good of their *Wives* and *Children*.

**Country-m.** Some of them were my *Neighbours*. And we saw none of their *Wives* or *Children* the better for't.

**Obf.** They were Oblig'd by the Court not to make a *Shew* of it.

**Country-m.** Does this pass among our People?

**Obf.** As Clear as *Lightning*! For I'll tell thee, *Country-man*, We have us'd them so to Believing, that they are now got beyond any Common *Probability*, they care not for it, it has no Relish upon their *Pallate*, which has been so long *Season'd* with *Haut-Gousts*. And a Lie that wou'd Choak others, Go's down with Them as *Glib* as *Chicken-Broth*. And the Greater the Lie, the Surer the Truth of it! They Examine not what is Told them, but from Whom it comes. WE cannot Invent any thing, they will not Believe. Nor the *CHURCH-MEN* Prove any thing by *Ten Thousand DEMONSTRATIONS*, and *FACTS* as Clear as the Sun, which they will Believe. And the More they Prove, you must Believe the Less. La ye, *Country-man*, be sure there is some Trick in't, when they come to Proving.

**Country-m.** I'll warrant ye, *Master*, they shall ne'r Catch me *Believing* or not *Believing*, but as serves the Cause.

**Obf.** Without this Qualification, no Body can serve it. Therefore, *Country-man*, we go on, and still keep up the Cry of the Fire of *London*. No longer ago than last *Week*, we Publish'd a Book Intitul'd, *The Protestant Jesuite Unmask'd*, where, p. 43. We bring in the *Laudites* and *High-Flyers*, (with *English Faces*, and *Romish Hearts*) as Concern'd in the *Popish-Plot*. And add, *I might Mention the FIRE of LONDON; and that those taken on that Account, were generally Favour'd and Dismiss'd, without being brought to Trial.* This, with the *Inscription* which our Dear Sir *Patience Ward*, put upon the Monument, in his *Mayrality*, in the Time of the *Popish-Plot*; And Renew'd in the *Mayrality* of our Right Trusty Sir *Thom. Pilkington*, in the last *Reign*, when WE were *Trump*, is a Full and Absolute Proof.

**Country-m.** Enough! Enough! We have Enough! It is as Plain as a *Pike-staff*. It was the *Laudites* and *High-Church* that Burnt *LONDON*. And those *Whigs* who Suffer'd for it were *Martyrs*. And shall be put in *Red-Letters*, in our next Years *Calander* of *Parridge's Almanack*, where our-Colour'd *SAINTS* are *Inlisted*, the *Martyrs* of *Legion*.

**Obf.** When thou'rt in a *Coffee-House* or so, say, Did not the *Dissenters* and *Whigs* in *London* suffer as much by the Fire, in their *Proportion*, as other People? And who can think they wou'd be so Mad as to Burn their own Houses?

**Country-m.** May not the same be said of the *Church-men*, and the very *Papishes*, who Suffer'd too in their *Proportion*?

**Obf.** Thou'rt a very *Troublesome Fellow*. Never was *Bays* so Tormented. Thou spoil'st all my *Plots*.  
P'll

I'll talk no more with thee, if thou be asking *Questions*.

But what *Proportion* had the *Papishes* in *London* to *Us*? There I have thee again.

*Country-m.* But the *Church-Men* had a Greater *Proportion*, than both of *Us* put together. Therefore this will Clear *Them* more than *Us*. Besides, a Man's *All* is his *All*. And tho' it be less than another Man's, yet it is as much to him. Wou'd a Man set *Fire* to his own *House* to *Burn* his *Neighbours*, tho' it were a *Bigger* House than his?

*Obs.* Am I bound to *Answer* all thy silly *Questions*? But the *Zeal* of the *Papishes* and *High-fliers* is such, That they would *Destroy* Themselves, to *Destroy* Others: Any thing for *Old Mother CHURCH*.

*Country-m.* And have not *We* *Zeal* as well as *They*? Wou'd not *WE* do as much for our *Puffs*, as *They* for their *Church*? And have *WE* not Done it? For *De-Throning* and *Murdering* of *Kings*, and filling *Nations* with *Blood* and *Destruction*; *We'll* Compare (for our *Time*, and in our *Proportion*) with *Mahomet* himself, or any *Popish* and *High-flier* of 'em *All*.

Did'st thou Recommend *Zeal* to me, as the chief *Engine* to carry on the *Cause*; and which wou'd *Prevail* over all the *Law* and *Reason* on the *Church's* side, and *Run* them *Down*? Such an *Implicit* and *Blind ZEAL*, as neither to *Believe*, *Hear*, nor *See*, but as I'm *Bid*! And now wou'd'st thou take *Zeal* from *Us*, and give it to *THEM*? To our *Enemies*, to the *Church*? Then they wou'd soon be *High-Church* indeed! And our *Legion* sent into the *Herd* of *Swines*! *We* shou'd not stand an *Hour* before them, if they had *Zeal*!

*Obs.* I did not mean, That *All* the *Papishes* and *High-fliers* had that *Zeal* to *Destroy* Themselves, to *Hurt* Others, to *Burn* the *City*, tho' their own *Houses* must *Perish* with the rest: But only, That the chief *Managers* and *Conspirators* had that *Zeal*. For example, *Country-man*, suppose *Thee* and *I* had now such a *Design* in our *Heads*, and thought the *Destruction* of *London* so necessary to our *Cause*, as that the *Loss* of particular Persons of our own side ought to be *Dispens'd* with, for a much Greater *Mischief* to our *Enemies*: Do'st think we wou'd go and *Tell* all these Particular Persons of it? No, I'll warrant thee, Some of them wou'd have a mind to save their own *Houses*. And our *Plot* wou'd soon take *Air*. *We* cou'd Repair our *Friends* *Losses* afterwards, if we *Gain'd* our *Point*. And they must *Run* a *Hazard* as well as *We*. Is it not the same case in a *Battle*? *We* must expect to *Lose* *Friends*. And must put some upon *Desperate* *Posts*.

Now, *Country-man*, let thee and *I* talk *Cooly*. Why shou'd it be thought strange, that *WE* who set *Three Nations* in a *Flame*, shou'd scruple the *Burning* of one *Town*, for the carrying on of the same *Cause*? *WE* who sought *Aid* of the *French King* against *K. Charles I.* why shou'd we not *Join* with the *States* of *Holland* against *K. Ch. II.* Especially considering, that there was open *War* then betwixt them, at that time when *London* was *Burnt*. And he was our *Enemy*, having *Cheated* *Us* at his *Restoration*, to which some of *Us* Contributed, in what *Manner*, and for what *Ends* thou *Know'st*—He *Burnt* our *Covenant* by the *Hands* of the common *Hang-man*: And set up *Episcopacy* (which that and we *Abjur'd*) openly and above-board. *We* had been Engag'd in several *Plots* against him, from the *Day* of his *Restoration* to that time. For which he *Hang'd* some of *Us*, and others *Fled* to *Holland*, where they were at the time of this *War*, and took *Service* with the *States*. All which was fairly a *Declaration* of *War* against him. And therefore was no *Treachery* in *Us*. These *Acted* in Concert with the *Council* of our *Great Ones* that *Sat* in *London*, from whom *Issu'd* all *Orders*;

which *Council* receiv'd their *Direction* from *Another* in *Holland* who *Sat* with the *States*. As it was fully *Prov'd* at the *Trial* of our *forefaid Martyrs*, and is *Express'd* in these very words, in the *London Gazette* of *April 30. 1666*.

*Country-m.* But tho' the *Design* was both *Just* and *Honest*, as well in *Us*, as in the *States*, being the time of *War*. Yet in *Us*, it will look very *Barbarous*, to be in a *Plot* to *Burn* the whole *City* of *London*, almost Exhausted by the *Plague* the *Year* before, the *Effects* of which lay *Heavy* upon the *Nation*, upon *London* more especially, as well as the *War*. That one wou'd think there need'd no new *Calamities* to be Added to These! It shews *Us* to be *Divest'd* of all *Bowels* towards our own *Native* *Country*.

*Obs.* No, *Country-man*, as I have *Vindicated* the *Justice* of our *Undertaking*, so I will *Engage* to shew, That this was the most *Merciful* *Method* we cou'd have taken. For, look ye, *Country-man*, if we had *Succeeded* in our *Enterprize* of *Killing* the *King*, and the *Lord General*, of *Seizing* the *Tower*, and the *King's Guards*, as was *Design'd*, which you will see in the *forefaid Gazette*; the *Consternation* had been so *Great*, and no body to have *Headed* the *Church Party*, and the whole *Town* in *Fire* about their *Ears*, at the same time; That we might, without any *Opposition* or *Blood-shed*, have *Seiz'd* the *Government*. And then having a *Strong Party* here, *Back'd* with our *Allies* in *Holland*, then in *War* with *England*; What cou'd have withstood *Us*? Then had our *PUSS* been set up, and *Establish'd*, all at Once. And had not this been with *Infinitely* less *Loss* and *Destruction* to the *Nation*, than it *Cost* *Us* to set *Her* up against *K. Charles I.* who wou'd not suffer us to do it *Quietly*; And so was the *Cause* of all the *Blood* and *Desolation* that follow'd! And if our *Design*, so well *Laid*, had taken *Effect* in the other *Parts* of it, as well as in that of *Burning* the *City*, the *Nation* had been *Freed* from all those *Plots* and *Conspiracies* with which we have *Vex'd* it ever since, and ever must, 'till we get into the *Saddle* again. *We* had then *Extirpated* the whole *Race* of the *Sruarts*, as we *Resolv'd* at the *Rye-house*, if that had *succeeded*. And as we still *Resolve*, and are not *Afraid* to *Publish* it, this same year in *Print*, in *Faction Display'd*, *Part Second*, wherein we *Applaud* the *Just* and more *Approv'd* *Design*, Of quite *Exploding* that *Detested* *LINE*.

Which if we had done at the *Fire* of *London*, there had been no *Revolution* in 1688, nor any *Wars* succeeding upon that, which has *Cost* the *Nation* so much *Blood* and *Treasure*. All this had been sav'd. And wou'd not the *Fire* of *London* have been a *Cheap Bargain* for all this?

*Country-m.* It is Plain that no other *Interest* but *Ours* cou'd be serv'd by the *Burning* of *London*. It was to the *Destruction* of the *Church*, who wou'd never set *Fire* on their own *Temples*. The *Papists* had no *Foreign Power* Ready to have sav'd their small *Numbers* in *England* from an *Universal Massacre*, if the least *Umbrage* of this had *Appear'd* against them. If the *Like* had *Appear'd* against *Them*, as was *Prov'd* upon our *Martyrs*, and *Confess'd* by them, we had been upon the *Bones* of every one of them in the *Nation*. The *Sword* of *Justice* shou'd have had no *Trouble* with them. And no *Papist* after that, wou'd ever have been *Permitted*, by our *Laws*, to *Live* in *England*. Therefore since all the *Probability* and *Proofs* lies against *US*, I think we had best leave off *Charging* Others with it, and e'n suppose it was done by *Chance*.

*Obs.* *Chance*! How can that be? When it was *Detected*, *Prov'd*, and *Confess'd* four *Months* before, and the very *DAY* Nam'd on which it was *Done*.

*Country-m.* Then we have *Rais'd* a *Devil* I'm afraid will *Pass* our *Skill* to *Lay*. Of which at another opportunity.